



Citizen Update

Summer 2004

Addressing Casper's Meth Epidemic



Meth lab waste is extremely hazardous and often found in parks, gutters, and other public places. Cleanup of waste such as that pictured above must be done by hazardous waste experts. Citizens should not touch any questionable litter and report any suspicious waste to police at 235-8278.

Town Hall Meeting

The five most recent murders in Casper have all been meth related. Casper police detectives spend approximately 80% of their time on meth related investigations. Facts like these and questions from citizens concerning the methamphetamine problem in Casper will be the focus of a town hall meeting on September 16 in the Casper Council Chambers.

The meeting format will feature a panel of experts from law enforcement,

"We want all citizens to know about the dangers of meth in our community and understand how they can work with us to address this problem."

—Casper Police Chief Tom Pagel

treatment programs, and education with local media representatives moderating. Questions can be submitted prior to the meeting via website (casperwy.gov), fax (235-7536), or mail (Meth Question, 201 N. David, 82601).

The town hall meeting is part of Casper's Meth Watch program. Meth Watch coordinates with businesses and citizens to look for signs of methamphetamine labs and pushers. It is an offshoot of the 2004 methamphetamine awareness conference.

The police department along with numerous local and state agen-

cies will host another methamphetamine awareness conference in January 2005. The conference's featured free public forum is planned for January 6.

Drug Court

The Casper City Council and police department are among the advocates who developed the Natrona County Adult Drug Court. A joint project of the city and the county, the drug court has been in operation since 2001.

A preliminary report by the Wyoming Statistical Analysis Center has found that addicts sent through the Natrona County program are responding well to their treatment, which is a rigorously structured program of counseling, testing, and supervision. Recidivism rates among graduates are extremely low even when compared to other drug courts across the country. Twenty-nine enrollees have graduated from the Natrona County program.



10 Years of Meth Use

Drug courts have been found to be an effective alternative to the regular court and prison system that has been frustratingly unable to get drug users to break their habits. There are 17 courts in Wyoming.

It's about more than just puppies & kittens...

Metro Animal Shelter euthanized 1,459 animals last year. About one out of every three cats and dogs that enters the Casper shelter is euthanized. One of the most responsible and important things that you can do for your companion animal is to spay or neuter it. This simple step prevents pet over population. Also:

- Spayed/neutered dogs and cats are less likely to become lost because they roam less.
- Spayed dogs do not go into heat and thus do not stain carpeting and furniture with their discharge.
- Spayed/neutered dogs and cats are less likely to fight with other animals.
- Neutered male cats are less likely to spray walls, carpets, etc.
- Spayed cats do not go into heat and frustrate their owners with yowling, anxious behavior, and attracting unneutered males.
- Spayed/neutered pets do not get fat and lazy unless their owners feed them too much and do not give them sufficient exercise.

Citizen Survey Influences Funding

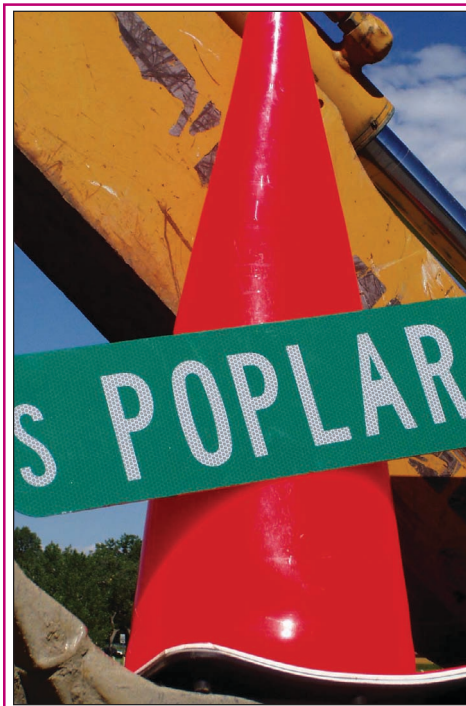
Every two years, Casper residents are surveyed and asked to rate city services. Overall, the 2004 survey found Casper residents were very satisfied. Citizens, however, did indicate they wanted more emphasis in code and ordinance enforcement, in police services, and in maintenance of streets. City Council responded by authorizing expansions to both the code enforcement division and the police department as well as continuing the increased investment on street maintenance.

Code Enforcement

The code enforcement division deals with property condition and upkeep issues in the city such as weeds, abandoned cars, and littered property. The staff expansions will help in responding more quickly to ordinance enforcement calls each year. Through July, 1700 calls were logged.

Police Services

The addition of six police officers should have a significant impact on police response times for non-emergency calls. Currently, officers can be on the scene in six minutes or less in emergencies. Non-emergency calls can take more than half an hour.



Poplar Street, Collins Drive, CY Avenue, and Valley Drive are examples of the street maintenance investments.

Street Maintenance

In response to consistent requests from citizens for more emphasis on street maintenance, additional Optional One Percent Sales Tax funds have been directed to street maintenance and reconstruction. In the summer of 2004, \$1.8 million was invested, and \$5.5 million will be invested in summer 2005.



When it's finished, the Aquatic Center will feature a leisure pool, a lap pool, a hot tub, a sun deck, and a lazy river that can be used for exercise or floating on an inflatable tube.

After a minor setback, the Aquatic Center is back on track. In June, construction workers at the construction site found some oil residue in the soil. "It was a relatively small pocket," said Jim Evans, the city engineer who is working with the project. The oil probably came from the old Franco Refinery that had once stood on the site. The Department of Environmental Quality worked with the City on the cleanup. A block of soil about the size of a large room was removed and taken to the city's landfill for disposal. Despite the short delay, the project is back on schedule and set to open in the fall of 2005.

Aquatic Center Progresses